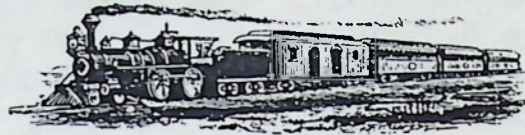


M A K I N G T R A C K S



BIG BUTTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 1999

WINTER EDITION

TALES OF EARLY SETTLEMENT

By Jim Watkins

JIM WATKINS BEGINS TALES OF EARLY ROGUE RIVER DAYS

These stories were told by Jim Watkins and were first published in *THE AMERICAN* by Ellis C. Galt, Editor and Publisher, Central Point, Oregon.

Edited by Charleen Brown, 1998.

ARRIVAL IN THE ROGUE VALLEY

I was a lad of fifteen when I moved with my parents to the Rogue River Valley from Missouri in the fall of 1877. We traveled by rail as far as Redding, California, where my brother-in-law had driven from "Ranchoree" (Rancheria) by horse team to meet us. It took nearly a week north by horse and wagon from Redding, California to Lick Prairie, three miles from "Ranchoree".

The area was named "Ranchoree" because the Klamath Indians would come there in the fall, camp near the stream and hunt deer, dry the meat and tan the deer hides. In those days the Indians made fires to burn out the old brush, and keep the country clear of old, dead timber, smarter than the white man of today. You could ride a horse almost anyplace through the timber, and today

(Continued on page 2)

RE-EXAMINING THE PAST AS A WAY TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

BY JOYCE HAILICKA

Men and women who achieve their seventy-fifth birthdays in 1999 will have lived through some of the severest crises in our nation's history. Never did they expect to see the nation face another crisis like the ones they knew when they were young.

The Great Crash hit at age five. Much of their childhood was spent in the hardest of times. Their parents were pressed and some were broken by the miseries of a nation in financial ruin.

Their seventeenth year was marked by the coming of war that engulfed their generation, wounding some, killing others, marking forever all that it touched.

This generation saw America rise from desolation to world dominance on their labors and sacrifices. Some take great pride in the unprecedented prosperity they made possible for their children. They helped to make the world safe for democracy.

Today, new crises threaten to destroy what their generation and their children's generation

(Continued on page 3)

you can't even go through the brush and dead timber on foot.

"Ranchoree" was one of the largest stock ranches in Southern Oregon and was owned by the Beall (pronounced Bell) brothers, Tom and Vint. When we first came to Oregon, they had nearly 400 head of cattle. My brother, John, was taking care of the cattle. He was also in charge of cutting and putting up the hay for them. The Beall brothers were well-to-do and employed many persons to help with the ranch work. they were very generous in giving work to poor people. I do not know how we would have made it in the early years except for the help given us by the Beall brothers. They would send up wagon loads of food of all kinds; flour, sugar, lard, bacon, corn, and wheat. It was hauled up by a four horse team in a wagon with a trailer wagon hitched on behind. They would come up from the Beall home place to "Ranchoree" which was the headquarters for the stock.

MY FIRST DEER

In the fall of 1878, I killed my first deer. I had an old muzzle-loading shotgun. Because I was so young, I wouldn't hunt alone, so one day my brother, John, and George Beall said they would take me out and let me kill a deer. We went up Clark's Creek a mile from "Ranchoree". There we came on an Indian camp with about fifty Indians living there. the men would hunt deer and the women would stay in camp to dry the meat and tan the deer hides.

My brother and George knew some of them. The capital of the tribe was Pit River Charley. He told my brother that he would go with us. He had a Henry rifle which was the first breech loading

rifle I ever saw. They told me to follow a certain trail and not to leave it, they would run a deer out so I could shoot it. My brother, John, and George Beall were together on my left while Pit River Charley was on my right about two or three hundred yards away. I suspect the reason Pit River Charley wanted to be that far away from me was to be sure of being clear out of range of my gun. They didn't know what I might shoot.

I had gone about a quarter of a mile when three deer trotted across the trail in front of me and stopped. The biggest one was nearest to me. I should say about 75 yards away. I fired the shotgun and the deer went down with a broken neck. I yelled and the other hunters came running. The deer I shot was a crippled doe. Her right foreleg had been shot off at the knee joint about a year before or at least long enough before so that it was healed over. You can be sure the other hunters laughed and teased me plenty for shooting a crippled doe.

The others started out again but I didn't go on with them but waited where I was expecting the two fawns to come back. They didn't, however, and in about three hours, John, George and Pit River Charley returned. John had killed two, George had killed three and Pit Charley had killed seven deer. It took them only three hours and they didn't go more than two miles the whole time. My brother and George each had muzzle rifles and Pit River Charley had a Henry rifle.



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THE BILL EDMONDSON MEMORIAL MUSEUM AND CABOOSE HOURS

FRIDAY 1- 4 P.M., SATURDAY 10 - 4 P.M. AND SUNDAY 1-4 P.M.

HOSTESS: KAETE THOMPSON 865-3333
NELLIE RAGSDALE 865-3332

worked hard to build. The Y2K crisis hangs over us like a dark cloud. It is good to ask ourselves whether there is a productive role for our older citizens to play in our communities? The answer is definitely "yes"!

This generation of older people are a valuable resource of talent, expertise, and wisdom. Can we afford to waste such a treasure of knowledge and experience?

This is the time for communities to issue a new call for retired citizens of all ages to share their skills, wisdom, and stories to help us get through problems like Y2K. Many still have much to contribute.

Begin to talk to older people in your community. Find out how they got by without electricity, flushing toilets, water, and a scarcity of food. Offer to help them if they need help. Be there for each other in good times and bad. Isn't that what neighbors are for?

Among the treasures of the community are its senior citizens.

BBHS ENDOWMENT FUND: Keeping History Alive

In 1996, the Big Butte Historical Society started an Endowment Fund. An account was opened from some small donations made by some of its members. The society has been able to add money from fundraisers and donations earmarked for the endowment. The account has accrued interest and has grown to over \$6,000 in two short years.

The endowment serves as a "cushion". Currently, the historical societies throughout Jackson County receive funding from the county historical tax fund. We would like to thank our treasurer, Cory Hamann, for the excellent job managing the historical society funds.

Your donations to the BBHS Endowment Fund helps to keep the history of Butte Falls alive. A copy of our yearly audit, by Richard Brewster, CPA, is available upon request. For more information on how you can contribute to the Endowment Fund, call Cory Hamann at 865-3310.

Dear Members of the Big Butte Historical Society and Friends,

We are all citizens of history. In this issue of Making Tracks, we will be looking back in time, as well as looking into the future.

Challenging times are ahead for all of us. Not only are we approaching the end of a decade, but we will be entering a new century. As we enter the new millenium, what type of changes will Butte Falls see? What are we going to look like? Are we going to continue to prosper? Will we be able to provide necessary services to all our citizens?

Can our schools survive or will our population begin to dwindle? Will Prospect be faced with having to merge with Butte Falls School District? Can we continue to find ways to provide jobs and create opportunities for our citizens, young and old alike? What kind of technological changes will we see?

We hope this issue will prove useful in helping you understand the past and how it relates to the future. Thank you again for your continued support and confidence.

We don't attempt to predict how the community will grow or change in the future years. We recognize that everything cycles. However, we feel the historical society is our best hope for preserving the past for this and future generations.

Sincerely,
Cory Hamann (President)
Joyce Hailicka (Chairman)

MILL SITE FEASIBILITY STUDY:

A Historical Overview of the Falls

BY JOYCE HAILICKA

A group of Butte Falls citizens have formed a falls park committee. The group has been working closely with Dr. Rod Winthrop in order to gather information that can help determine possible uses at the falls.

A mill site feasibility study has been funded by Rogue Valley Council of Governments. Kay Atwood has prepared a historic overview of the mill site dating back as early as 1827. It is believed that people have used the falls for thousands of years.

Ms. Atwood also covers the period from 1900 to the end of World War I. It was during this time period that a sawmill was built and the town was first platted. By 1925, the sawmill was eventually closed and the steam mill was eventually demolished.

All that remains from the mill are the concrete footings. The site has played an important role in our history. Bert Harris had a vision. And he carried out that vision. And without that vision the town of Butte Falls would not be here today.

Today, seventy-five years later, a new vision is emerging. And not "one" person, but many are responsible for that vision. A special thanks to Rod Winthrop, Kay Atwood, Dennis Gray, Alan Buchta, The Rogue Valley Council of Governments, and the citizens of the falls park committee for their work, vision, and commitment to the project.

The final draft with recommended uses at the falls should be completed by June, 1999.

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"History isn't about the rich and famous. It's about what happens to people, millions of anonymous people, like you and me."

Making Tracks is a quarterly newsletter sponsored by the Big Butte Historical Society. It is designed to keep you up to date on happenings at the museums. It is also intended to bring you new perspectives and pleasures in understanding the important role history continues to play in our community's past, present, and future.

We depend on you and your membership support. If you haven't sent in your annual membership form, please take this opportunity to do so today. Membership is only \$5.00 a year. Thank you.

Joyce Hailicka, Chairperson

PLEASE JOIN US!

MAIL TO:

**Big Butte Historical Society
P. O. Box 379, Butte Falls, OR 97522**

Now that you heard about BBHS, why not get to know us even better by becoming a volunteer!
We'll look forward to having you join us!

Name _____

Affiliation _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Here's how I can be of help:

_____ I'd like to _____

_____ Tell me more about being a board member.

_____ I could be a guest speaker. My topic: _____

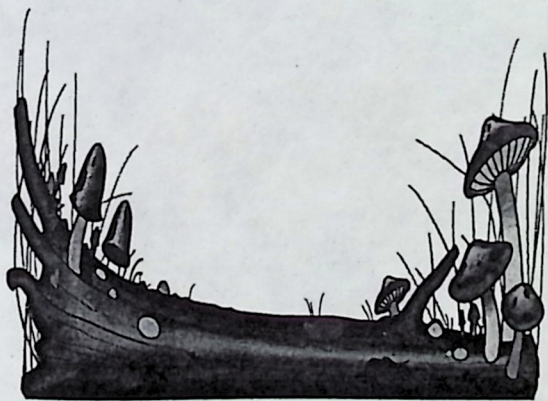
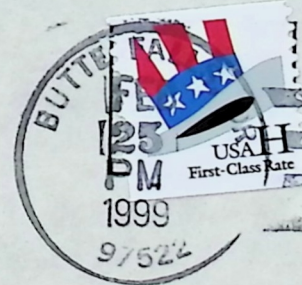
_____ I'd like to help with fundraising efforts.

_____ I do not have time to volunteer at this time but I would like to make a monetary contribution to this organization.

BIG BUTTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 379

Butte Falls, OR 97522



Barbara Hegne
421 Stevens Road
Eagle Point Oregon 97524

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER